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Applicability: All DDSN State Employees

PURPOSE

To establish a consistent agency-wide policy for employee absenteeism and tardiness and to provide a set of disciplinary guidelines to be used when such absenteeism and tardiness represents an abuse of policies.

DEFINITIONS

Excessive Absenteeism is defined as an attendance record in which the employee has (a) two (2) or more occasions of unscheduled leave in any **two-week period**, (b) established an unacceptable pattern of leave usage (e.g., before and after non-working days or pay days).

Unscheduled Leave is defined as any leave taken that has not been prearranged with the supervisor. This definition includes annual leave that has not been requested twenty-four (24) hours in advance, or family sick leave and sick leave that has not been prearranged with the supervisor or officer of the day at least **two (2) hours** prior to the employee's scheduled reporting time for shift employees or within the first fifteen (15) minutes of the workday for other employees. Definition includes approved emergency leave **after one occasion**.

Tardiness is defined as any situation where an employee is late to work from five (5) minutes to one (1) hour. Lateness of more than one (1) hour will be considered as absence without approved leave.

PROCEDURE

It is the intention of this directive to provide a fair review of employee attendance. There may be occasions when the employee must request emergency leave. In such cases, the supervisor shall make the determination to approve or disapprove the leave. Approved emergency leave will not be considered a part of a trend unless the requests for emergency leave become frequent or prove to have been fraudulent.

Supervisors are responsible for auditing leave records monthly. When an employee has two (2) or more occasions of unscheduled leave, the supervisor will attempt to determine the nature of the absences. The employee will be counseled and a record of such action will be placed in the supervisor's file. In cases where continued absenteeism occurs, the supervisor shall follow the Guidelines for Employee Disciplinary Action in the SCDDSN Rules and Regulations manual.

Tardiness is a special type of absenteeism. Tardiness occurs when an employee is late in reporting to work from five (5) minutes to one (1) hour. When an employee is tardy on three (3) occasions within a thirty (30) day period, the employee shall receive an oral reprimand. Subsequent occurrences will be addressed as outlined in SCDDSN Guidelines for Employee Progressive Discipline Action in the SCDDSN Rules and Regulations Handbook.

Records of employee discipline for absenteeism and tardiness shall remain active for two (2) years. If no further problems arise, such warning notices shall be removed from the employee's personnel folder. Records of suspension for absenteeism and tardiness shall remain a permanent record in the employee's personnel file.

Leave patterns can show patterns of abuse of sick and annual leave. Determination of an established pattern of unacceptable leave usage shall be the responsibility of the immediate supervisor. The following examples represent patterns of unacceptable leave usage, but are not all-inclusive:

- (a) Two or more occasions of unscheduled leave in a **two (2) week** period or three occasions during a span of **six (6)** pay periods or less.
- (b) Unscheduled leave, sick leave and family sick leave taken on Friday, Saturday, Sunday or Monday on three (3) or more occasions during a span of six (6) pay periods or less.
- (c) Unscheduled leave, sick leave or family sick leave taken before or after a non-working day and/or pay day on three (3) or more occasions during a span of six (6) pay periods or less.
- (d) Unscheduled leave, sick leave or family sick leave taken on a particular day of the week on three (3) or more occasions during a span of six (6) pay periods or less.
- (e) Unscheduled leave, sick leave or family sick leave taken on days when minimum staff are scheduled to work on three (3) or more occasions during a span of six (6) pay periods or less.
- (f) Use of sick leave or family sick leave at a rate that exceeds the accrual rate. Exceptions may be made for extended illnesses of three (3) days or more.

The granting of leave by the supervisor is an administrative determination and is based on the scheduling and work requirements of the work unit. Supervisors should make an effort to honor the annual leave requests of employees, yet it must be recognized that at times it is not possible to approve such requests.

RESPONSIBILITIES

The control of absenteeism is one of the primary responsibilities of management personnel at every level within the Department. It is recognized that the major responsibility for controlling absenteeism rests with the first line supervisor. Effective control of absenteeism is enhanced when supervisors are aware of the reasons for the employee's absence on every occurrence, regardless of the record of absenteeism. This policy has been developed to assist supervisory personnel in the control of

absenteeism. The overall success of this policy in controlling absenteeism will depend on the example set by supervisory personnel, the consistent application of the policy to all employees and the support of all management levels to first line supervisors in carrying out this policy.

Training directors will ensure that this policy is included in initial orientation training for all employees.

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